

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An information processing apparatus comprising:  
first acquiring means for acquiring the number of times information contents are downloaded over a network;  
second acquiring means for acquiring the number of times said information contents are reproduced; and  
computing means for computing a pricing index for said information contents based on the number of times said information contents have been downloaded as acquired by said first acquiring means and on the number of times said information contents have been reproduced as acquired by said second acquiring means.

2. An information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said information contents include audio-visual information.

3. An information processing method comprising the steps of:

acquiring firstly the number of times information contents are downloaded over a network;

acquiring secondly the number of times said information contents are reproduced; and

computing a pricing index for said information contents based on the number of times said information contents have been downloaded as acquired in said first

acquiring step and on the number of times said information contents have been reproduced as acquired in said second acquiring step.

4. A storage medium which stores a program in a manner readable by a computer, said program comprising the steps of:

acquiring firstly the number of times information contents are downloaded over a network;

acquiring secondly the number of times said information contents are reproduced; and

computing a pricing index for said information contents based on the number of times said information contents have been downloaded as acquired in said first acquiring step and on the number of times said information contents have been reproduced as acquired in said second acquiring step.

5. An information processing apparatus comprising:

holding means for holding information contents;

first transmitting means which, in response to a request issued by another information processing apparatus, transmits said information contents from said holding means to the request-issuing information processing apparatus over a network; and

second transmitting means for transmitting a

notification to yet another information processing apparatus counting the number of times said information contents have been transmitted, said notification saying that said information contents have been transmitted by said first transmitting means.

6. An information processing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said information contents include audio-visual information.

7. An information processing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said holding means further holds supplementary information attached to said information contents; and

wherein said second transmitting means further transmits said supplementary information.

8. An information processing method comprising the steps of:

acquiring information contents;

in response to a request issued by an information processing apparatus, transmitting firstly said information contents acquired in said acquiring step to the request-issuing information processing apparatus over a network; and

transmitting secondly a notification to another information processing apparatus counting the number of

times said information contents have been transmitted, said notification saying that said information contents have been transmitted in said first transmitting step.

9. A storage medium which stores a program in a manner readable by a computer, said program comprising the steps of:

acquiring information contents;

in response to a request issued by an information processing apparatus, transmitting firstly said information contents acquired in said acquiring step to the request-issuing information processing apparatus over a network; and

transmitting secondly a notification to another information processing apparatus counting the number of times said information contents have been transmitted, said notification saying that said information contents have been transmitted in said first transmitting step.

10. An information processing apparatus comprising:

acquiring means for acquiring information contents over a network;

holding means for holding said information contents acquired by said acquiring means;

reproducing means for reproducing said information

contents held by said holding means; and

transmitting means for transmitting a notification over said network to another information processing apparatus counting the number of times said information contents have been reproduced, said notification saying that said information contents have been reproduced by said reproducing means.

11. An information processing apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said holding means further holds supplementary information attached to said information contents; and

wherein said transmitting means further transmits said supplementary information.

12. An information processing method comprising the steps of:

acquiring information contents over a network;

holding said information contents acquired in said acquiring step;

reproducing said information contents held in said holding step; and

transmitting a notification over said network to an information processing apparatus counting the number of times said information contents have been reproduced, said notification saying that said information contents

have been reproduced in said reproducing step.

13. A storage medium which stores a program in a manner readable by a computer, said program comprising the steps of:

acquiring information contents over a network;

holding said information contents acquired in said acquiring step;

reproducing said information contents held in said holding step; and

transmitting a notification over said network to an information processing apparatus counting the number of times said information contents have been reproduced, said notification saying that said information contents have been reproduced in said reproducing step.